

Institution: Newcastle University
Unit of Assessment: 16 Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
Title of case study: Crofting Reform: From Research to Policy and Practice
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The Crofting Reform Act 2010 and Scottish Government's Policy Statement on Crofting 2008 implemented the main recommendations of the report of the Committee of Inquiry on the Future of Crofting, chaired by Professor Mark Shucksmith. The Inquiry itself was an example of a co-production approach to the generation of knowledge for legal and policy application. The report, in turn, was informed: by work of CRE researchers at Newcastle University in the 1990s and 2000s on "neo-endogenous rural development"; by theories and studies of "collaborative planning" developed by planning researchers in Newcastle University; and by Shucksmith's work, often synthesising the two, from 2005. This body of research informed a major overhaul of crofting legislation and governance in Scotland aimed at reversing the decline of crofting as a social practice with major territorial effects, and is actively debated in other countries as an appropriate approach to rural development.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The concept of neo-endogenous rural development was first elaborated in the 1990s in the Centre for Rural Economy (CRE) by Philip Lowe (Professor, 1995-) (1), Neil Ward (Research Associate/Lecturer/Professor, 1993-2001, 2004-2008) (1), Jonathan Murdoch (Research Fellow, 1992-1995) (1), and Christopher Ray (Research Fellow 1996-2007) (2, 3) in order to explain emerging evidence about the nature of rural development in Europe. This work has been developed further since 2005 by Mark Shucksmith (Professor, 2005-), working across the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape (APL) and CRE, refining and promoting both the conceptual framework and its implementation in policy and practice (4, 5).</p> <p>The concept of neo-endogenous rural development critiqued both the dominant model of 'top-down', exogenous development (exemplified by the EU Common Agricultural Policy) and transformed the model of 'bottom-up', endogenous development, based on local, participative approaches. It proposed instead a 'networked' model of development, acknowledging that both local and extra-local factors are critical to processes of rural development and it developed and populated a new conceptual framework that has informed far-reaching analytical and normative responses. This framework stressed the role of human and social capital and the dynamics by which it accumulates in individuals, businesses and organisations. Shucksmith (4) pointed out the affinities of this model with Healey's (Professor, Emeritus Professor) collaborative planning approach (6), and specifically with the concept of institutional capacity, and he proposed concepts of 'networked development' and 'disintegrated rural development' which brought together these two literatures and schools of thought. The result was an emphasis on: mobilising local actors and communities in place-shaping; a focusing of attention on the 'mobilisation' process, in particular, on the role of the state as an enabler of locally controlled development; and, in addressing issues of inequality and capacity. There is a risk with bottom-up development that it exacerbates inequality because there is an unequal capacity to act between local place-based communities, and because, within communities, powerful elites can capture most of the benefit. For Shucksmith, there is a crucial role for the state in engaging in capacity building so that local actors are enabled to influence both local and extra-local domains (4).</p> <p>In summary, the networked (neo-endogenous) approach to rural development involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the mobilisation of assets (tangible and intangible, human and non-human), both within and outwith the locality; • the building of capacity to act, both amongst individuals but especially collectively in terms of the capacity of people within an area to work together towards a shared vision of their future;

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- networks which connect people within and beyond the locality; and
- an enabling state, with appropriate cross-sectoral and partnership working at all levels with a culture of institutional learning at its heart.

It is important to note that this body of research develops both a conceptual framework and a normative agenda: it not only analyses what is underway in some rural places, but also promotes it as a means of 'doing' rural development in other areas. Recently, Shucksmith has been the main academic advocate of Newcastle's networked development approach, bringing the arguments to a wider, non-academic audience, most recently through the Carnegie UK Trust's publication of his report, *Future Directions in Rural Development* (October 2012) and lectures such as his 2008 Macaulay Lecture (Available in audio online at <http://www.macaulay.ac.uk/MacaulayLecture/2008/>) and his 2013 address at the House of Lords. The invitation to Chair the Inquiry into Crofting hence provided him with the opportunity to put into practice what he was advocating in terms of the networked development approach.

3. References to the research

1. Lowe, P., Murdoch, J. and Ward, N. (1995) Beyond endogenous and exogenous models: Networks in rural development, in J.D. van der Ploeg and G. van Dijk (eds) *Beyond Modernisation: the impact of Endogenous Rural Development*. Assen, The Netherlands: van Gorcum, pp.87-105. Available from HEI on request.
2. Ray, C. (1998) Culture, intellectual property and territorial rural development. *Sociologia Ruralis* 38 (1), 3-20. Available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9523.00060/pdf>.
3. Ray, C. (2006) Neo-endogenous rural development in the EU. In Cloke, P., Marsden, T., Mooney, P (eds) *Handbook of Rural Studies*, London, Sage. Available from HEI on request.
4. Shucksmith, M. (2010) Disintegrated rural development? Neo-endogenous rural development, planning and place-shaping in diffused power contexts. *Sociologia Ruralis* 50 (1), 1-14. REF2 output: 139216. Note: draft paper first presented at Waseda University, Tokyo, 2005, and at ESRS XXI Congress, Keszthely, Hungary, 2005, so preceding Crofting Inquiry.
5. Shucksmith M and Rønningen K (2011) The Uplands after Neoliberalism? The role of the small farm in rural sustainability, *Journal of Rural Studies*, 27, 275-287. REF2 output: 170871.
6. Healey P (2006) *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*, MacMillan, 2nd Edition. [First edition published in 1997; Google Scholar: 3061 @ 16.10.2013]. Available from HEI on request.

4. Details of the impact

An important opportunity to put the networked rural development approach into practice on a significant scale arose in 2007, when Mark Shucksmith was appointed Chair of the Scottish Government's Committee of Inquiry into Crofting. Crofting is a distinctive and highly regulated form of land tenure specific to the northern half of Scotland. It is also a cultural heritage of major international significance. At the same time, there have been years of decline in crofting and the Shucksmith Inquiry was charged with ensuring it had a future.

Principles of networked rural development were central to the approach and conduct of the Inquiry and the Inquiry Report, and thereby impacted on the Scottish Government's Crofting Policy (2008) and the Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 and are beginning to impact on changes in crofting governance and to crofters lives. The networked rural development approach was operationalized in the Inquiry as: allowing people in places more control over the decisions made about them, and in the state adopting a more enabling role.

The approach and conduct of the Inquiry during 2007 and 2008 was shaped by Shucksmith's commitment to applying the insights from the research on networked rural development. The Inquiry commissioned a review of evidence of the effectiveness of rural development approaches from a researcher at Newcastle University (Atterton), which summarised the contributions made by researchers in CRE and elsewhere in developing the concept of neo-endogenous rural

development. Such knowledge from academia and other 'experts', though, was matched by a valorisation of the knowledge of local people through a programme of local meetings which allowed them a collective voice. The Director of the Scottish Crofting Foundation (now Federation) was quoted in The Herald as saying "There is no doubt the authentic voice of Scottish crofters is in this report" (**IMP1**).

The 2008 Inquiry report itself is explicit in drawing attention to the Atterton research, with a summary of the commissioned review of research forming one section of the Inquiry report (**IMP2**), and the underpinning research explicitly referenced. Briefly, the Inquiry report proposed local mobilisation and community empowerment in respect of both regulation and development, supported by generative state action and by refocused managerial technologies which would operate to encourage local strategies and initiatives. These proposals illustrate how neo-endogenous rural development and place-shaping might proceed in practice. Using the neo-endogenous approach, the Inquiry sought to build the capacity of crofting communities to mobilise strategically and collaboratively, empowering communities at various levels.

The Environment Minister, responding to the Inquiry report (**IMP3**), drew contrasts with the 1954 Taylor Inquiry into Crofting which emphasised the need for initiative to come from outwith the crofting communities in order to bring about change, a clear acknowledgement of its exogenous development approach. Referring to the Shucksmith report he emphasised its contrasting networked development approach: "The principles of localism and communality are central to the report's recommendations and, like the committee of inquiry, I believe they are at the heart of crofting. The Government believes strongly in empowering communities to take control of their own destinies and in enabling people to make the plans and take the decisions that affect them and their communities". He went on to say that any new governance structures should facilitate local input, reflecting the need for supportive external networks for neo-endogenous development.

The Inquiry itself, the report, and the processes leading to policy and governance change and enactment have stimulated debate, between local people in meetings, in the media, and in the Scottish Parliament, so extending the impact of the Newcastle research. As identified by a former Chairman of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), "Many of the Shucksmith Report's proposals have been implemented in subsequent legislation – which has resulted, as the report recommended, in the formation of a largely elected Crofting Commission and in more vigorous action being taken to deal with problems such as those arising from crofter absenteeism and neglect of holdings" (**IMP4**). The changes to crofting law and governance emanating from the Shucksmith report are to be found in the Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010; the setting up of an elected Crofting Commission in 2012 to replace the appointed Crofters Commission; responsibility being passed to HIE for crofting development; and implementation of a new definitive map-based crofting register.

The Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (**IMP5, IMP6**) in particular enacts the proposals in the Shucksmith Report for radical measures to extend the 'place-shaping' neo-endogenous rural development approach beyond those areas in which community buy-outs had occurred under the earlier land reform legislation. The new Crofting Commission has six of its nine Commissioners elected by Crofters, and sees its regulatory role as having "the potential to create stronger, more resilient, ambitious, sustainable and culturally rich communities, and a well-managed landscape and environment in the crofting areas" (Crofting Commission, para 20) (**IMP7**), so emphasising its focus on communities rather than simply on individual crofters' rights. HIE has accommodated its new crofting development responsibilities in its Strengthening Communities division alongside the Community Land Unit, so underlining the commitment of the new governance arrangements to empowered people in places, as recommended in the Shucksmith Report.

The new systems of governance are still very new, but participatory cultures are emerging: crofters are beginning to engage with processes which seek to involve them in determining their futures (e.g., the election of crofters onto the new Crofting Commission with local turnouts of between a third and a half of crofters (**IMP8**)); and measures are being introduced to encourage crofters to engage in local collective action (e.g., the Scottish Government's encouragement of voluntary,

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community-led mapping and registration rather than mandatory registration by individuals (**IMP9**). A former Chairman of HIE said “the overall outcome [of the Shucksmith Inquiry] has been to give crofting a more assured future.” (**IMP4**). Similarly, the Minister told the Scottish Parliament that “crofting is in a perilous state and we have an obligation to ensure that it carries on into future generations. Mark Shucksmith and his colleagues have done us a great service in helping us to ensure that it does” (**IMP3**).

While crofting is specific to Scotland, and the impact of the networked development research can be tracked through the conduct of the Inquiry, the Report findings, the policy and governance changes, and to the engagement of crofters in determining their futures, in Scotland, the underpinning research and the Inquiry’s work have had influence beyond this jurisdiction. The Irish Government recently launched an Inquiry into land reform in rural Ireland, modelled on the Crofting Inquiry’s work, and presentations on both the research and the Crofting Inquiry’s proposals have been of interest to policy and practice users in Norway (*Nationen*, 9 September 2009, p.18) and England. In 2013, the report of the Crofting Inquiry was translated into Japanese (**IMP2**) because “Japan is a country of peasants and community and is suffering from the same problems, such as absenteeism. Grappling with the land problem in Scotland is a very instructive experience to our society” (**IMP10**).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- IMP1** *The Herald*, Leader article, 10 August 2009. Available at: <http://www.heraldsotland.com/reform-of-crofting-1.850575>.
- IMP2** Committee of Inquiry on Crofting (2008) *Final Report*, Edinburgh, Scottish Government. (ISBN 978-0-7559-5723-1). Available at: <http://www.croftinginquiry.org/Resource/Doc/0/0000405.pdf>. Translated into Japanese by Mitsuyoshi Ando and published by the University of Tokyo, as 全国農地保有合理化協会 『土地と農業』 N o .43(2013) (ISSN 0287-0053).
- IMP3** Official Report, Scottish Parliament, 15th May 2008, columns 8620-8624. Available at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28862.aspx?r=4796&mode=pdf>.
- IMP4** Personal communication from former Chairman of HIE (1998-2004), founding Director of the Scottish Crofters Union (1987), and best-selling author of ‘The Making of the Crofting Community’.
- IMP5** Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.
- IMP6** The Scottish Government News. Available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/releases>. For example, news stories on 19 May 2009, 5 January 2010, 10 March 2010, 13 May 2010, 2 July 2010.
- IMP7** Crofting Commission (c2013) Policy Plan. Available at: <http://www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk/legislation.asp>.
- IMP8** Crofting Commission – details of commissioners. Available at: <http://www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk/commissioners.asp>.
- IMP9** The Scottish Government, Crofting Policy. Available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/Rural/crofting-policy/Act/>.
- IMP10** Personal Communication, Professor, University of Tokyo.